

JESUS IS

BETTER

A STUDY IN HEBREWS

LEADER GUIDE

IMPORTANT DATES

2021

August 2021

- 25th: 6th Grade introduction
Time: 6:30-8 pm
Location: The Mill

September 2021

- 1st: Fall Kick off
Time: 6:30-8:30 pm
Location: The Mill
- 24th: 4th Friday
Time: 7-9 pm

October 2021

- 6th: No Exodus Students
- 22nd: 4th Friday

November 2021

- 12th-13th: Exodus Student Fall Retreat
Location: Crowders Ridge

December 2021

- 17th: Exodus Students Christmas Party
Time: 7-9 pm
Location: Thomas and Laura Griffin's house
3658 St Andrews Ln. Gastonia, NC 28056
- 22nd and 29th: No Exodus Students

2022

January 2022

- 5th: First Weekly meeting after Christmas Break
- 28th: 4th Friday

February 2022

- 4-6th: 180 Weekend
- 9th: No Exodus Students

March 2022

- 25th- 4th Friday

April 2022

- 13th: No Exodus Students
- 22nd: 4th Friday

May 2022

- 18th: Graduate Recognition
- 25th: End of Year Cookout

June 2022

- 13th-16th: Summer Camp

July 2022

- 23rd-29th: Summer Mission Trip(s)

August 2022

- 10th and 17th: Off
- 31st: Fall Kickoff

November 2022

- 11th-12th: Fall Retreat

WEEK 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

Scripture: Hebrews 1:1-4

Main Idea: Jesus is the ultimate hero of the whole Bible. Every story, every promise, every book, ultimately points to Jesus, and we, like the audience of the book of Hebrews, need to be reminded of what an awesome hero Jesus is. Jesus is a better hero because:

He is the Heir (1-2)

- The Son speaks for His Father. (1)
- The Son inherits everything that belongs to the Father. (2)
- Everyone who believes in Jesus receives everything He inherits.

He is God (2-3)

- Jesus literally created everything. (2)
- Everything that we need to know about God, we can see by looking at Jesus. (3)
- He is so powerful that He holds everything together simply by speaking. (3)
- Jesus being God also means that He is powerful enough to save us.

He is the Savior (3-4)

- What does “purification for sins” mean? (3)
- Jesus wants us to be close to Him. (3)
- Jesus is still at work right now, executing the Father’s plan to save His people. (4)

WEEK 1 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is an "heir"?
2. What does it mean to inherit something?
3. What does purification for sins mean?
4. Why was this "purification for sins" necessary for us to have eternal life with Christ?

WEEK 2

JESUS IS A BETTER (BIG) BROTHER

Scripture: Hebrews 2:1-18

Main Idea: In Ancient Near Eastern culture, the oldest son or the big brother carried a tremendous amount of weight. They were supposed to inherit the family land, take over the family business, and take care of the other members of the family after the father passed away or stepped down. There are several places in the Bible where we see older brothers fail not only their fathers but also their siblings. Jesus is referred to more than once in the New Testament as the “Firstborn”. He is the eldest sibling, God’s oldest son, our big brother, and unlike earthly brothers, Jesus never fails His Father or His siblings. Jesus is a better big brother because:

He saves us (1-4; 14-15)

- This is the reason that Jesus came. (1-3)
- We have proof. (4)
- What are we saved from? (14-15)

He suffers for us (8-10; 17-18)

- This proves that God cares about us. (9-10)
- Suffering leads to glory. (10-11)
- Jesus identifies with us. (11; 17-18)

He sees you as family (10-13)

- Jesus calls us sons and daughters. (10-11)
- Jesus presents us to God the Father. (11-13)

WEEK 2 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are we saved eternally from?
2. Why was suffering necessary to bring glory?
3. What does it mean to be a son/daughter of Christ?

WEEK 3

JESUS GIVES US BETTER REST

Scripture: Hebrews 3:1-16

Main Idea: We live in a world, a time, a culture that by design makes us weary. There is always something else to do, something else to worry about, or something or someone to try and measure up to. There is always something that could go wrong and plenty to be afraid of. This makes us weary. Throughout the Bible, God offers His people rest, but time and time again His people lose their rest because they refuse to trust and obey God. Hebrews teaches us that Jesus offers us better rest than anything that we could find our own, better than any rest that this world can offer us. In this section we will be answering three questions:

What is rest? (according to the Bible) - Hebrews 3:1-6; Genesis 1-2

- A Biblical Definition of Rest (Gen 2:1-2; 3:1-6)
- How does Jesus give us this rest? (3:1-6)

Why don't I have it? (3:7-16)

- The story of the Israelites (7-19)
- We tend to be just like the Israelites.

Why do I need it? (16-19)

- You were made for it.
- The alternative is perishing. (18-19)

WEEK 3 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is rest?
2. Why do we need rest?
3. How do you best rest?
4. How can we find rest in Jesus?

WEEK 4

JESUS GIVES US BETTER REST

Scripture: Hebrews 4:1-13

Main Idea: This week is a continuation of our last lesson. In this section, we will answer the question "how can I have rest"? As we look at Hebrews 4:1-13 we will see that Jesus offers us the rest we need and we can have it by:

Believing the Gospel (1-5)

- What is the Gospel?
- The rest God offers is available to those who believe. (2-3)

Resting Regularly (6-12)

- We need regular time in God's word. (9-12)
- This is why we attend worship on Sundays. (7-9)

Having an eternal perspective (8-13)

- We have a God who is living and active. (12)
- Part of our rest comes from knowing that we are looking forward to something better. (13)
- We can look forward to eternity because Jesus has made us right with God. (13)

WEEK 4 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the Good News?
2. Why is it that God only offers true rest to those who unite in the faith?
3. Why do we need to spend regular time in God's Word? (What is stopping you from doing that?)
4. We know that we have eternity with Christ if we know him, but why can we find rest in that?

WEEK 5

JESUS IS A BETTER ADVOCATE

Scripture: Hebrews 4:14-5:10

Main Idea: What is an advocate? By definition, an advocate is someone who advocates for someone or something. To be more specific, an advocate is someone who would speak on your behalf in a court setting, provide you with emotional support, or make sure that you received the resources you needed from your local government. An advocate represents you and works on your behalf. In the Old Testament, it was the Priest's job to advocate for the people of Israel before God. They would listen to the needs and requests of the people and then take those requests before God, pray on behalf of the people, and make sacrifices for the people. The problem though is that no matter how good of an advocate a priest could be, they were ultimately still sinners and would eventually fail. We need someone perfect, powerful, and faultless to be our advocate before God. Jesus is that advocate. He is the better advocate because:

He is empathetic (4:14-16)

- Jesus understands every struggle that we face because He has gone through it Himself! (14-15)
- We are supposed to come to Him with whatever we need, no matter what we're struggling with! (16)

He is eternal (5:1-9)

- Who is Melchizedek? (Gen 14)
- He is unlimited.
- He isn't just our advocate before God, He is God. (5-6)

He ensures that we will get what we need (5:7-10)

- Jesus came to live on earth and die on the cross to represent us before God. (7)
- Because Jesus is a perfect advocate, God the father listens to the requests Jesus makes on our behalf. (8-9)
- Jesus is the source of what we need most. (9-10)

WEEK 5 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Knowing that Jesus understands our struggles, how can that cause us to trust him more?
2. Why did God need to appoint Jesus as the High Priest?
3. Why did Jesus have to come live on earth and die and represent us before God?
4. Because Jesus is our advocate, how could that encourage us to seek him in prayer?

WEEK 6

JESUS GIVES US BETTER CONFIDENCE

Scripture: Hebrews 6:9-20

Main Idea: Confidence is the feeling or belief that someone can rely on someone or something. As humans, we will place our confidence in someone or something. That's just how we are wired. The problem humans have is that we tend to have confidence in people or things that will ultimately let us down. In this section of Hebrews, the author is assuring us that we can have complete confidence in God. Because Jesus came, died, and rose, we can be completely confident in God's love for us and the hope He promises. Jesus gives us better confidence.

We are loved (9-10)

- Jesus calls us "beloved". (9)
- He loves us so much that He wants to trust in "better things"

God is just (10-12)

- God sees and cares about the brokenness in the world and is doing something about it. (10-12)
- God sees and values when you serve. (10)
- He wants you to have certainty. (11-12)

Our Hope is certain (13-20)

- God kept His promise to Abraham, even though Abraham had to wait for a while. (13-15)
- God made an oath that can't be broken. (16-18)
- God's love and character are our anchors. (19-20)

WEEK 6 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does it make you feel knowing that you are loved by God?
2. What does it mean to be loved by God?
3. Because of our confidence in Christ we should serve him. What does it look like to serve him and how could you better serve him (at home, at school, on the sports field, etc...)?
4. How can we be certain in the hope we have in Christ?
5. What oath was made that can't be broken?

WEEK 7

JESUS IS A BETTER PRIEST

Scripture: Hebrews 7:1-28/Genesis 14

Main Idea: It's important to be reminded that the writer of Hebrews is insistent on his audience understanding that Jesus is either the fulfillment of or the best version of any Old Testament law, person, or promise. It's also important to remember that perhaps the most important role or person for God's people in the Old Testament was the priest. That's because the priest served two incredibly important functions. He offered sacrifices for the sins of God's people and offered prayers on behalf of God's people. This week, in Hebrews 7, the writer uses an old story about a guy with a weird name to help us understand that Jesus is a better priest. Here's why Jesus is a better priest.

He has a better priesthood (1-10)

- There were 2 lines of priests.
- He has no beginning.
- He has no end.
- His priesthood is tied to a singular family line.

He has no limits (23-25)

- The OT priests had their own sins that they also had to make sacrifices for.
- Jesus was sinless.
- The OT priests kept dying.
- Jesus lives forever.

He is Perfect (26-28)

- He is perfect in character.
- He perfectly completed the work that had to be done.

WEEK 7 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does Jesus being the ultimate priest fulfill the Old Testament?
(His priesthood is tied to a singular family line.)
2. Why is it important that Jesus was/is sinless?
3. What was the work that Jesus had to complete perfectly?

WEEK 8

JESUS IS A BETTER PROMISE

Scripture: Hebrews 8:1-13

Main Idea: The people of Israel oftentimes missed what God was offering them because they were too focused on the “earthly”. The priests, the tent, temple, were all good things, but they were ultimately meant to point God’s people back to Him and His Heavenly Kingdom. We aren’t any different. We love the earthly things that God has given us, but we often wind up making those things the “ultimate thing” when in reality God is using those things to point us back to Him. God wants us to have a better hope, a better promise, and that’s what Jesus came to bring; that’s who Jesus is. He is a better promise.

A better place (1-7)

- The Israelites placed their hope in arriving in a promised land.
- The Israelites viewed the tent in the desert and then later the actual temple as the place where Heaven and Earth actually met.
- God gave Moses a vision of what the heavenly temple looked like and told him to construct the earthly temple to look like that.
- Jesus gives us a better promised land and a better place to worship. He makes the heavenly available to us.

A better relationship (8-13)

- Our relationship with God isn’t based on our performance. (8-9)
- God does the work to be close to us and to help us know Him. (10-11)
- Our relationship with God is secured in His grace and forgiveness. (12-13)

WEEK 8 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did the Israelites tend to put their hope and trust in instead of trusting in God?
2. Are there things that you tend to put your hope and trust in instead of putting them in God?
3. Read verses 8-12. What are the differences between the “old covenant and the new covenant?”
4. How has Jesus made it possible for us to have a personal relationship with Him?
5. How do we participate in this relationship that God wants to have with us?

WEEK 9

JESUS IS A BETTER SACRIFICE

Scripture: Hebrews 9:1-14

Main Idea: In Hebrews 8, we started to see the author of Hebrews explain that the laws, promises, and practices of the Old Testament were actually meant to point us to something better. In the first part of Hebrews 9, the author makes that same truth even more clear by telling us that even the Old Testament Tabernacle was a “symbol” of what was to come. The author follows that by telling the readers that none of the Old Testament sacrifices could actually save them from their greatest problem, their sin. Jesus came to be the sacrifice that we all need; He came to do what the earthly sacrifices couldn’t do. He came to do what none of us can do. He came to save us from our sins. In these verses, we will see that Jesus is a better sacrifice because...

He Saves us (from our sin) (6-12)

- We need to understand the “old way” of making sacrifices. (1-8)
- The old sacrifices couldn’t deal with our hearts, just our actions. (8-11)
- Jesus was able to pay for every sin ever committed and through His sacrifice. Jesus was able to break sin’s power over us. (11-12)

He sets us free (12-13)

- We can come before God with a clear conscience. (12)
- We can come into His presence. (12)
- We can serve Him from a place of sincere love and worship. (13)

WEEK 9 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who was allowed to go into the Tabernacle and into the "Most Holy place" (the second section of the Tabernacle)? Why were only these people allowed to go in?
2. Why did the priests have to offer animal sacrifices?
3. Why were the animal sacrifices ultimately not enough? What couldn't they do that God's people needed them to do?
4. How is Jesus' sacrifice better than the Old Testament Sacrifices? What does His sacrifice do that earthly sacrifices can't?
5. Do you ever struggle with feeling like you're not good enough to belong to God? How does Jesus' sacrifice encourage you that you don't have to be good enough to belong to God?
6. According to verses 12 and 13, how does Jesus' sacrifice change the way that we live?

WEEK 10

JESUS IS BETTER ASSURANCE

Scripture: Hebrews 10:19-25

Main Idea: During this point in history, the Christians whom the author of Hebrews was writing to were likely facing challenges to their faith from two different sides. On one side, the Roman Empire was beginning to heavily persecute the church because Christians claimed that Jesus was God instead of the Emperor. On the other hand, the Jews of that time would have regularly accused the Christians of being wrong when it came to God and salvation. So these Christians needed assurance. We find ourselves needing the same thing in the world we live in today, in which nothing seems to be certain. Jesus is the assurance that we need. He assures us of three things in this text.

Jesus assures us that belong to God (19-22)

- We are welcomed, at any time, into God's presence! (19-20)
- God invites us to draw near to Him. (21-22)
- We can approach Him with confidence because God now sees us the same way He sees Jesus. (22)

Jesus Assures us that what we believe is true (23)

- God has never broken a promise to His people. (23)
- Jesus' death and resurrection give undeniable validity to everything God has promised and to our faith. (23)

Jesus Assures us through our obedience (23-25)

- We obey by stirring up one another towards good works. (24)
- We obey by encouraging one another. (24)
- We obey because we know that Jesus is coming back. (25)

WEEK 10 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can you have the assurance that you belong to God?
2. What does the writer mean in verse 20 when he says that the “curtain” has been opened? What would that have meant to the people reading this for the first time and what should it mean to us?
3. This passage also tells us that we can be confident when we approach God. Do you feel confident when you approach God? Why or why not?
4. What is the “confession” that the author tells us to hold on to?
5. Based on verses 24-25, how can we be obedient to Christ, and why should we be?

WEEK 11

JESUS GIVES US A BETTER FAITH

Scripture: Hebrews 11:1-6

Main Idea: We all live by faith in something or someone. In fact, the words faith and hope are almost synonymous. However, there is a difference between placing your faith or hope in something or someone that you can see, something earthly, and placing your hope and faith in a God who you can't physically see or touch. But it's the faith in God that the author of Hebrews tells us is the key to a relationship with God. It's the key to understanding the Bible. It's the key to having a certain hope instead of just optimism. Jesus came to give us the faith we need. Jesus gives us better faith.

A Better definition of Faith (11:1)

- What does it mean to have faith in something?
- The difference between Christian faith and worldly hope

A Better object of our Faith (2-3)

- What or who are we supposed to have faith in?
- Jesus is a better object of our faith than anything or anyone else.
- Faith allows us to understand the Bible better and it allows us to understand the world better.

A Better Reward for our Faith (4-6)

- Examples from history of people who lived by faith
 - Abel (Genesis 4:1-7)
 - Enoch (Genesis 5:21-24)
- We get to be close to God and be blessed by God.

WEEK 11 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is faith?
2. What is the difference between Christian faith and earthly hope?
3. How does faith in God change the way we read the Bible? How does this change the way that we look at the world?
4. Read verses 3-6 again. What are some of the things that we must believe in order to have in God? Do you ever find it challenging to live by faith? Why or why not?
5. What are some ways that God has made Himself known so that it is easier for His people to live by faith?

WEEK 12

JESUS GIVES US A BETTER STORY

Scripture: Hebrews 11:29-40

Main Idea: We all love great stories. We like to tell stories. We love good movies and good books. We all also want to be a part of a story or we may want to change our own story. Jesus gives us a better story. He makes us a key part of His story. When you come into a relationship with Christ you become part of the same amazing story that Adam, Abraham and Sarah, Moses, David, and the disciples are all a part of, the story that God has been telling since Genesis, the story in which God through His people and ultimately through His son, is saving the world.

A story about God saving His people (29-35)

- God saves his people from their enemies. (29-33)
- In this story God will ultimately save His people from the ultimate enemy. (35)

A story with ups and downs (35-38)

- The challenges that God's people have faced and continue to face give validity to His story.
- God's people have and will suffer. (36-38)
- God uses the suffering of His people for His glory. (37-38)

A story that isn't over yet (39-40)

- God's people before us were waiting for a savior to come.
- We are waiting for the savior to come again.
- The ending will be perfect.

WEEK 12 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you know the stories of any of the people that the writer mentions in this passage? If so, which one is your favorite and why?
2. What can we learn from some of these people and their stories? How do their stories help us better understand what it means to trust and follow Jesus? (Have your students read some of these stories out loud.)
3. Based on this passage, what excites you about being a Christian and being a part of God's story? What might be scary or challenging about being a part of God's story?
4. In verse 40, the author tells us that God had "provided something better" for us that some of His other followers didn't have. What do you think that "something better" is?
5. How does the story of the Bible (God's story) end for God and His people? What has God done for us and given us so that we can trust His story?

WEEK 13

JESUS GIVES US BETTER ENDURANCE

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-17

Main Idea: There are two sports mentioned in the Bible; Fighting (or wrestling) and running, and running is the most often referenced of the two. In fact, the Bible refers to the Christian life several times as a “race” that we need to run and finish well. This week our text uses that language, 12:1 tells us to run with endurance. But that is easier said than done, this life is challenging, this life is full of heartache, this life is full of unexpected hardships that none of us can control. The good news though is that Jesus gives us the endurance that we need to finish this race well. Jesus gives us better endurance by...

Running the race before us (1-4)

- This gives us an example to follow. (1)
- Jesus endured the cross for us. (2)
- Jesus is where we want to be and He will make sure that we get there. (2)

Giving us a Father who loves us (7-17)

- God disciplines us because he loves us. (7-11)
- This gives meaning to our suffering. (10-11)
- God the Father wants us to have the inheritance that He has set aside for us. (12-17)

WEEK 13 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to “run the race with endurance” and how do you think we accomplish that?
2. In verse 2, the writer says that Jesus endured the cross because of the “joy set before him”. What joy is the writer referring to, what motivated Jesus to die on the cross?
3. Do you believe that God actually uses the hard things in your life to accomplish good things for you? Can you think of examples in your life when something hard happened but you can see now how God was using that to help you grow?
4. Does it bring you comfort or confusion to know that God can use the hard things in your life to teach you and challenge you?
5. Read verses 12-17 as a group. Based on these verses, what does your Heavenly Father want for you? What does He want to protect you from?

WEEK 14

JESUS IS BUILDING A BETTER KINGDOM

Scripture: Hebrews 13:1-21

Main Idea: As soon as Jesus' adult ministry began, the phrase "kingdom of God" began being used. This is because Jesus came to earth in order to set up the kingdom of God on earth. Jesus came to build a better kingdom, and we will see that kingdom perfectly finished one day. But in the meantime, we get to participate in building the kingdom of God. As a Christian, you are the primary tool that God is using to build a better kingdom for His people and we see in Hebrews 13:1-2 how Christians are supposed to participate in building the better kingdom that Jesus came to build. Jesus builds a better kingdom

Teaching us how to treat others (1-4; 7;17-18)

- Fellow Christians (specifically those in church with you) (1)
- Strangers (2) - The word hospitality literally means to treat a stranger like family.
- Those who are suffering (3) - This verse is specifically referring to those who were suffering for their faith.
- In romantic relationships (5)
- Our leaders (7:17) - These verses are primarily referring to leaders who have taught them spiritually.

By giving us better worship (5, 15-17)

- When we worship God we are free from being ruled by the need to always have more.
- We are more content when we worship God.
- We are more generous and helpful. (15-16)
- When our hearts are full of worship we tell other people about Jesus. (15)

By giving us the Gospel (9-12; 20-21)

- The teaching of the Gospel not only saves us but it protects us from false teachings. (9-10)
- The hope of the Gospel is that Jesus will make sure that everything is set right in the end, and He will guide and protect us and help us accomplish everything that He is calling us to do. (20-21)

WEEK 14 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think that Jesus places such a big emphasis on how we treat one another?
2. Verses 7 and 17 instruct us how to treat and to interact with our “leaders”. What type of leaders is the writer referring to? How are we supposed to interact with these leaders?
3. Does verse 5 say that it is wrong to be wealthy? If not, what does the writer mean when he says “the love of money”?
4. How does trusting in Jesus and the Gospel cause us to become more generous and willing to serve others?
5. Verse 9 tells us not to be led away by teachings different from what the Gospel teaches. Can you describe what the Gospel teaches? What are some teachings in our world that are different from the Gospel that we need to be aware of?

RESOURCES

Scan the following QR Code:



or visit

theexoduschurch.org/studentresources

